

Message

From: Cirian, Mike [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=98D0FD2CBB3F4F25B819C6929E18D08D-CIRIAN, MIKE]
Sent: 4/18/2016 2:53:26 PM
To: Vranka, Joe [vranka.joe@epa.gov]; Moler, Robert [Moler.Robert@epa.gov]
Subject: RE: Missoulain Opinion - Ryan Zinke - April 18, 2016

Wow, talk about uninformed.

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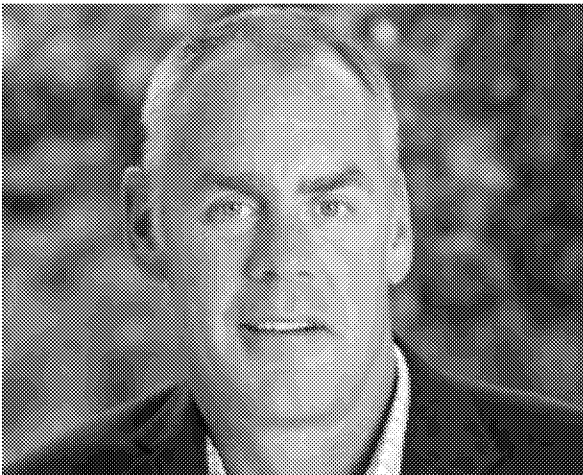
From: Vranka, Joe
Sent: Monday, April 18, 2016 8:46 AM
To: Cirian, Mike <Cirian.Mike@epa.gov>; Moler, Robert <Moler.Robert@epa.gov>
Subject: Missoulain Opinion - Ryan Zinke - April 18, 2016

FYI

http://missoulain.com/news/opinion/columnists/local-control-at-cfac-is-critical-for-future/article_2ea8b030-2976-5619-ab75-dcff8bb97c29.html

Local control at CFAC is critical for future

- RYAN ZINKE
- 1 hr ago



Zinke

During my last visit home in the Flathead, in between spring cleaning and shuttling my son to his track meets, I read an article in the paper about U.S. Sen. Jon Tester's visit to the Columbia Falls Aluminum Co. facility. Only a month earlier, I made a similar visit to gauge the progress that's being made. As a Flathead native, it gives me great relief and optimism that this issue is receiving the attention it deserves and that crews are making progress. People should be engaged because we are all in this together, and it affects us all. While there is some difference in how we get to the goal, I think we all agree that Glencore must

be held accountable and the site must be fully cleaned and restored so that it can once again contribute to, not weaken, the community.

The debate is not whether Glencore is held accountable. We all support that point. The question is the process of how we restore the site so it once again benefits Columbia Falls and Flathead County. After being in Congress for a year, I can tell you for a fact that the Environmental Protection Agency is not the solution we should seek. The EPA is the definition of government bureaucracy. It's top-heavy, cumbersome and costly. We know from past experience in Montana and across the country that once a community gets put under the EPA's thumb, all state and local control is gone, and all we have to look forward to is a long and expensive process that often leaves communities stigmatized with low property values.

Montana has 18 Superfund sites. Not one of them has been fully completed. Once a project has been listed by the EPA, a never-ending gray cloud looms over the community, marring the reputation of the site, the community and everything around it. Imagine tourists researching the area in hopes of planning a vacation to Glacier National Park. If the first thing that comes up on Google is a Superfund site, they will probably reconsider.

In fact, I challenge anyone to Google "Libby Montana" and see if the results reflect the community I know. I grew up in Whitefish and playing Libby in football was something we looked forward to, even though they always roughed us up. Their high school was ranked AA at the time and those guys knew how to hit. In the summer they all worked in the timber mills and it showed. Today, Libby is barely ranked as a B, industry has collapsed and its name is synonymous with the stereotypes that accompany a Superfund designation. This is the last thing I want for Columbia Falls. We need to work toward growing our communities, not crushing them.

The Flathead is full of potential. We have some of the best real estate, public lands and natural resources in the country. These assets attract visitors and investment from around the world, which in turn funds our roads, bridges and schools. I want Columbia Falls to be the way I remember it, a thriving town that served as the gateway to Glacier National Park. Our Flathead County commissioners share this perspective and recognize that the EPA taking over is not the way forward. We don't want to see our reputation, property values and growth potential hampered by the stigma of a Superfund site. Let's not forget, this is the same agency that has forced expensive rules like Waters of the U.S. and the Clean Power Plan on Montana homeowners, farmers, ranchers and small businesses.

We all want to hold Glencore accountable by getting CFAC cleaned up. That is non-negotiable. However, as a Flathead native, I don't see Washington as a savior in this scenario. Glencore has already commissioned an independent remediation plan and cleanup has begun. The state should fulfill its oversight roll and ensure that every cleanup recommendation within that plan is paid for and accomplished by Glencore. They can't cut and run as they have in the past.

Rather than burdening the Flathead with all the baggage that accompanies a Superfund site, we should handle this as Montanans, independent of the federal government, so we can restore Columbia Falls to the thriving community we all remember.

U.S. Rep. Ryan Zinke represents Montana in Congress.